

The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

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THE ENGINEER'S BOOKSHELF

By WILSON R. DUMBLE

Editor's note: Due to the illness of Mr. Dumble, Mr. John F. Moore of the department of English has very kindly consented to give some friendly advice on summer reading.

"For Summer Reading"

Most of our annual changes take place in May and June—the time to change the oil in your car from winter to summer grade, the time to swap your old felt hat for a new panama, the time to shed your red flannels (high time, really) and the time, according to most critics, to change from winter to summer reading. No one knows exactly what the relation between temperature and reading ability is, but book reviewers have always assumed that during the dog days a man has to be pretty careful about what he reads. Evidently it is dangerous for him to read just anything that happens to attract him; he should consult the newspapers and magazines for books recommended as "Suitable for Summer Reading." If he is foolhardy enough to tackle a book designed for Christmas reading when the mercury hovers around ninety-five in the shade, he does so at his own risk. Certainly the critics have given him plenty of warning.

The trouble with changing books along with oil and underwear is that the reviewers disagree violently on what we should change to, so it is impossible to be sure what books really are safe for summer reading. One reviewer says that a good arctic exploration book is more cooling than a dozen mint juleps, but another warns that such books will work up in the reader an envious rage ending in apoplexy. Again, one critic insists that sizzling romances will bring on a bad attack of nervous excitement and heat rash, while another argues that the reader will become so absorbed in following a torrid love story that his own heat troubles will be forgotten.

In this confused state of affairs, it is difficult to give a book an accurate b.t.u. rating. It would help if publishers would follow the theaters and paste on the jackets of suitable books some such notice as "Twenty Degrees Cooler Inside."

The sensible solution to the whole problem is suggested by the admirable old gentleman who tottered into the Olde Book Shoppe of a fashionable summer resort and began to make a leisurely inspection of the entire stock. He had thumbed through a dozen volumes after half an hour, when the impatient clerk approached him and said,

"May I suggest, sir, that you will find books suitable for summer reading on that table by the window?" The old gentleman looked up from a copy of Thompson's massive *Outline of Science*. "Young man," he snapped, "I can read just as well in summer as I can in winter. I can read anything anytime—with the possible exception," he added reflectively, "of January second."

So the "summer reading list" which Mr. Dumble has drawn up below is based on the conviction that the average student has a constitution at least as strong as the old gentleman's, and that he doesn't need to limit his summer reading diet to the rather watery soup prescribed by most of the reviewers. The books on the list are by no means all heavyweights, but all will stand reading and re-reading in any season. They are worth more than a mere summer flirtation; you will love them, as the song goes, in December as you did in May. The list is guaranteed to be weatherproof.

The advantages of the summer for reading purposes are obvious enough. In no other way can you travel so far, meet so many different people, and be in on such a variety of discussions—all without stirring an inch from your hammock and without moving a muscle except to discourage flies and to reach for the pitcher on the table now and then—truly a maximum of return from a minimum of effort. And of course the summer is about the only time the busy student can forget textbooks and look into some of the other books he has heard of during the year and made a mental note to read some day.

Probably the best way to use the list is as a basis for constructing a smaller one suited to your own tastes and convenience. As a beginning after exams, the nonsense fringe represented by the moonlight madness of Leacock and Benchley may be appropriate.

One time-tested approach to vacation reading is to select one fairly substantial work as a backlog—a book to be read *in* from time to time, between intervals of lighter stuff by men like Wodehouse and Woolcott. Most of the biographies are good backlogs, as are the essays by Robert Millikan, Nicholas Murray Butler, and Henry S. Canby. Short story addicts can follow up an individual author whom they have already met and liked, or they can shop around among the anthologies for variety.

A final warning: Don't try to read *Gone with the Wind* in a sailor's hammock; it can't be done.

J. F. M.

Suggested List For Summer Reading

The Modern Short Story

ANTHOLOGIES

- Bates, S. C.: *Twentieth Century Stories* (1933)
 Berdan, John M.: *Fourteen Stories from One Plot* (1932)
 Brown, Leonard: *Modern American and British Short Stories* (1929)
 Cross, E. A.: *A Book of the Short Story* (1934)
 Frederick, J. T.: *Stories from The Midland* (1924)
 Hastings, Clough and Mason: *Short Stories* (1924)
 Hibbard, Addison: *Stories of the South* (1931)
 Knickerbocker, Edwin Van B.: *Notable Short Stories of Today*
 Long, Ray: *Twenty Best Stories* (1933)
 O'Brien, E. J.: *The Twenty-five Finest Short Stories* (1931)
 Overton, Grant: *Great Modern Short Stories* (1903)
 Pence, Raymond W.: *Short Stories of Today* (1934)
 Pugh, Cynthia A.: *A Book of Short Stories* (1931)
 Ramsey, Robert L.: *Short Stories of America* (1921)
 Scarborough, Dorothy: *Selected Short Stories of Today* (1935)

INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS

- Anderson, Sherwood: *Winesburg, Ohio*
 Burke, Thomas: *Limehouse Nights*
 Canfield, Dorothy: *Hillsboro People; The Real Motive; Made-to-Order Stories*
 Cather, Willa S.: *Youth and the Bright Medusa; Obscure Destinies*
 Chekhov, Anton: *Collected Stories*
 Ferber, Edna: *Buttered Side Down; Cheerful, by Request; Mother Knows Best*
 Hemingway, Ernest: *Men Without Women; Winner Take Nothing*
 Henry, O.: *Selected Stories* (1922)
 Huxley, Aldous: *Brief Candles*
 Kipling, Rudyard: *Plain Tales from the Hills*
 Mansfield, Katherine: *The Garden Party*
 Maugham, W. Somerset: *East and West; Ah King; The Trembling of a Leaf*
 Maupassant, Guy de: *Short Stories*
 Morrison, Arthur: *Tales of Mean Street*
 Parker, Dorothy: *After Such Pleasures*
 Poe, Edgar Allen: *Tales*
 Biography
 Adams, Henry: *The Education of Henry Adams*
 Addams, Jane: *Twenty Years at Hull House*
 Allen, Hervey: *Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allen Poe*
 Arliss, George: *Up the Years from Bloomsbury*
 Bok, Edward W.: *The Americanization of Edward Bok*
 Boyd, Thomas: *Poor John Fitch*
 Bradford, Gamaliel: *Damaged Souls*
 Bryan, George S.: *Edison, The Man and His Work*
 Cellini, Benvenuto: *Autobiography*
 Craven, Thomas: *Men of Art*

- DeKruif, Paul: *Microbe Hunters; Hunger Fighters; Men Against Death*
 Duranty, Walter: *I Write as I Please*
 Garland, Hamlin: *A Son of the Middle Border*
 Hackett, Francis: *Henry the Eighth; Francis the First*
 Hunt, Frazier: *A Bachelor Prince*
 James, Marquis: *The Raven*
 Lamson, David: *We Who Are About to Die*
 Lawrence, T. E.: *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*
 Ludwig, Emil: *Bismarck; Napoleon*
 Masters, Edgar Lee: *Lincoln the Man*
 Maurois, André: *Ariel: The Life of Shelley; Byron; Disraeli*
 Merejkowski, Dmitri: *The Romance of Leonarda Da Vinci*
 Mumford, Lewis: *Herman Melville*
 Peattie, Donald Culross: *Green Laurels*
 Pringle, Henry F.: *Theodore Roosevelt*
 Sandburg, Carl: *Abraham Lincoln*
 Sandoz, Mari: *Old Jules*
 Seldes, George: *Sawdust Caesar*
 Sheean, Vincent: *Personal History*
 Steffens, Lincoln: *Autobiography*
 Strachey, Lytton: *Eminent Victorians; Queen Victoria; Elizabeth and Essex*
 Twain, Mark: *Mark Twain's Notebook*
 Walker, Stanley: *City Editor*
 Wells, H. G.: *Experiment in Autobiography*
 Werner, M. L.: *Barnum*
 Familiar Essay
 Belloc, Hilaire: *Conversation with a Cat, and Other Essays*
 Benchley, Robert: *Early Worm; From Bed to Worse; Treasurer's Report*
 Benson, A. C.: *Rambles and Reflections*
 Boyd, Ernest: *Literary Blasphemies*
 Brown, Rollo W.: *Lonely Americans*
 Butler, Nicholas M.: *Between Two Worlds*
 Canby, Henry S.: *American Estimates*
 Chase, Mary Ellen: *Golden Asses and Other Essays*
 Chesterton, Gilbert F.: *Generally Speaking: Poet and Lunatics*
 Day, Clarence: *Life with Father*
 Firkins, Oscar W.: *Selected Essays*
 Galsworthy, John: *Candelabra*
 Millikan, Robert A.: *Evolution in Science and Religion; Science and the New Civilization*
 Milne, A. A.: *By Way of Introduction*
 Morley, Christopher: *Romany Stain*
 Phelps, William Lyon: *As I Like It; Essays on Things*
 Priestley, J. B.: *I for One; Open House*
 Repplier, Agnes: *Times and Tendencies*
 Seitz, Don: *The "Also Rans"*
 Strunsky, Simeon: *Rediscovery of Jones*
 Van Vechten, Carl: *Excavations; Sacred and Profane Memories*